

My own precious darling,

I had intended fully that the first lines from home should be mine that I would write to you on Wednesday eve but I was prevented doing so, and now the first moment I feel able to hold my pen, I will begin to tell you all, from the house you left as desolate I went upstairs as soon as I could and went to work to put away all your presents, the very sight of them was so disturbing to me & your sweet wedding dress, emblems of the purity and loveliness of its owner, by the time all that was done, my bath was ready, and I had hoped that would set me up considerably, but it did not, and I went to breakfast with a heavy heart & with a choking in my throat that swallowing a mouthful was inappropriate: Your father said something about the travelers. I for one had avoided an allusion to you & that was the last feather to the camel's back of sorrow, down I broke. The fountains of the great deep were broken up, and I had such an agonizing attack, as I have only known once before in this troublesome world. I went to my room, I shut my door & could not be comforted for hours my own selfish grief but missing every true & generous feeling. I only felt my child, my darling was gone. When I got a little better I took of my bible the first words I read were truly suitable. The patriarch Jacob grieving for his children. I read "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me." My two eldest children God in His wisdom each taken to Himself. They were his own jewels & I had claimed them before the damps & dews of this dark world had dimmed their luster, but my Benjamin had gone uncertainly. I had heard the vow that gave him to another, and had no power to prevent it! Then my memory went back to the time you laid a helpless infant in my arms, you for whom I had nearly given my life, & I saw a smiling face & outstretched arms always anxious to leave any one to come to me, Then the thoughtful loving little child sitting at my feet, never happy away from me, & always turning her deep eyes by me, asking oldish questions, and talking far beyond her age. Then that long illness with its gloomy days & hours, your miraculous recovery God's goodness to me in that He restored you! All these things seemed to have happened long ago. Your youth & maiden life seemed to short & then how I thought of you as a wife. Your destiny in life settled, & in my heart of hearts I blessed you to the dear one you had chosen. I loved him to with almost a motherly love the last few days. His sweet forbearance this loving tenderness to my darling child. Surely I must love him for all that and you were happy and would be blessed with a good man[']s love, yes it was all selfishness I should be [sic] conquered this overwhelming grief. I had about arrived at this conclusion when Louisa came in, and we both had a earnest cry together, bringing all her love to comfort me, she too needed comfort. The girls were down stairs and had many visitors, but I suspect they found rather listless I send auditors to their fine speeches. Mary went in the evening. I could not go down to dinner to occupied for that meal seeing your vacant place. But in the evening with my head aching and feeling the size of a bushel & my eyes about the size and expression of a couple green peas boiled -- I crept down just before dusk for Emily had gone to the junction, & I remembered that Bridget had gone to bed with a headache, so I went down to have something fixed for tea. I went to the door & little Mary Ribbont came as I sat down. Her first words were "Mrs. Nicholson do you miss Miss Mary much?" Oh how I blubbered. Dr. Fridont [?] made me smile at her version of the interview. She told him "she was so sorry to see Mrs. Nicholson cry so about Miss Mary. She cried so she dropped the smelling bottle off her lap, & broke it all to pieces, and then she cried more about that than she did about Miss



Mary". On Wednesday night I went to bed in the moonlight determined to sleep & I did & felt better after my bath in the morning, but breakfast & that empty plate & chair which Lena had sat was too much for me, & my head was hurting all day. Your Aunt Mary came in & there was another overset. But I took a book when she was gone, & when my head would stop throbbing a little would read resolutely. Dinner was worse than ever for your father would speculate on your movements in the most lugubrious tones. Till at last I told him I could not bear it & he remarked with his usual philosophy that "I ought to have thought of that before." That [soured?] me a little and I asked him please to tell me what I had had to do with the course of events leading to the result. but you know everything he loves to trace to my agency [?] There was some abstract idea possessing him that it was my doing. In the evening we had many visitors, but I was in my morning wrapper I kept some what in the background by the parlor in the dark. Dr. Igebach – Eliza – Dr. Greer & the Humphreys. You were the subject of the kindest & most complimentary remark. All positive no man could be worthy of the good luck that waited on your cara sposa [dear spouse]. Mr. Gordon told Louisa that he had never seen a prettier supper of a wedding that passed off so well and that earned the general opinion or at any rate everybody has been noble enough to say so. For my own part I neither saw nor ate the supper a vision of a fair bride was all I saw & losing her so soon all I thought of. That at this moment your dear letter & my son[']s sweet postscript reached me. I hoped your dear writing quite as ardently & wept over the tear in your letter quite as tenderly as that aforesaid son ever would have done, such a sentimental old mother you both have!

I am truly glad Mr. Henry remained in Phila. it was very judicious for you would have suffered afterwards the consequences of a long a journey tho' at the time you might not have been sensible of the fatigue. I hope you will find everything you want in your trunks, & that you will be most careful about the changes in your dress -- wearing a flannel skirt morning & evening if you have to change in the middle of the day. The air so much cooler than here. We had a delightful cool day on Wednesday & I am so glad you did not suffer from heat. I too most fervently hope that the sweet place you are going to, and its charming attractions, with the quiet & regular hours will do wonders for you. I am sure nothing could be better to soften & soothe the little tendencies to nervousness that are your only complaint & make you strong & well. Emily wrote to you yesterday & I suppose told you all about herself. We all miss you more than tongue can tell, or pen either. At morning and evening, moontide & midnight, every thoughts are with you child of many hopes & prayers. God in his mercy protect & keep you both my darling children from all evil & lead you at last by peaceful pleasant paths to His heaven of love where partings are unknown. Good-bye my own own darling. Take good care of yourself & think of often & tenderly of your devoted mother.

E.A.N.

Papa & Emily send unlimited love. Write whenever you can & when you can't ask my dear Mr. Henry to do it for you.

